

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0521

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SF WA US UN FR GW UK CA
SUBJ: MEETING WITH PM VORSTER ON NAMIBIA

REF: CAPE TOWN 0519; STATE 076299 AND PREVIOUS

1. THIS MESSAGE COVERS THE HIGHLIGHTS OF AN HOUR-LONG MEETING WITH PM VORSTER AT WHICH I HANDED HIM AIDE MEMOIRE AND MADE ORAL POINTS ON BEHALF OF THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN BOTHA AND DFA SECY BRAND FOURIE. IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE THERE WILL FOLLOW MY ASSESSMENT OF THE MEETING.

2. AFTER READING THE AIDE MEMOIRE CAREFULLY AND LISTENING TO THE ORAL POINTS, PM REACTED BY SAYING THAT "TO PUT IT MILDLY, HE FOUND THIS APPROACH VERY STRANGE INDEED." SHOWING CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION, WHICH CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE MEETING, HE MADE THESE POINTS ABOUT THE DOCUMENT:
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A) YOU TALK ABOUT SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH A FULLY DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. AFTER WATCHING THE TURNHALLE PROCESS FOR TWO YEARS, NOW YOU TELL US THAT IT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

B) YOU SPEAK OF SUPERVISION OF THE UNITED NATIONS. THERE IS THE WHOLE HISTORY OF DR. ESCHER SENT OUT BY THE

UNSYG AS HIS REPRESENTATIVE TO WORK WITH US ON SWA. AFTER REACHING CERTAIN UNDERSTANDINGS WITH HIM, HE RETURNED TO NEW YORK BUT WE HEARD NOTHING FURTHER FROM THE SYG.

C) YOU CALL FOR AN END TO SAG ADMINISTRATION IN SWA. OUR ATTITUDE ON THIS IS VERY CLEAR AND HAS BEEN REPEATED MANY TIMES. WE HAVE SAID THAT WE WANT TO END OUR ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY.

D) REGARDING POLITICAL PRISONERS, HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY POLITICAL PRISONERS BEING HELD IN SWA. IF YOU REFER TO PEOPLE CONVICTED BY THE COURSTS AS COMMON CRIMINALS, THESE FALL OUTSIDE THE TERMS OF YOUR NOTE.

E) WITH RESPECT TO PEOPLE RETURNING TO SWA, HE FOUND THIS VERY STRANGE SINCE THERE IS NO HINDRANCE TO PEOPLE COMING BACK, INCLUDING SWAPO PEOPLE. WHY DO YOUR GOVERNMENTS BRING THIS UP? THEY KNOW THIS, OR DON'T THEY WANT TO KNOW?

3. BOTHA THEN ENTERED THE DISCUSSION FOCUSING FIRST ON LACK OF WESTERN RECOGNITION FOR WHAT THE SAG HAD DONE AND THEN EXPRESSING DISMAY OVER THE FIFTH PARAGRAPH OF THE AIDE MEMOIRE WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS A "VEILED THREAT." HE REFERRED TO THE KISSINGER-VORSTER TALKS ON NAMIBIA IN WHICH OUR POSITION WAS DESCRIBED AS "EXTREMELY REASONABLE." BOTHA SAID SAG WILLING TO BE REASONABLE BUT WILL NOT BE HAMMERED. MUCH OF SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION CENTERED AROUND THIS PARAGRAPH WITH PM AND BOTHA REFERRING TO IT AS "OBNOXIOUS" AND "UNNECESSARY" GIVEN THE SAG STATED POSITION THAT IT WAS PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT THESE MATTERS AS REFLECTED IN THE RESPONSE TO THE EC-9 DEMARCHE AND IN BOTHA'S RECENT CONVERSATION
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WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. AT ONE POINT BOTHA SUGGESTED THAT THE PARAGRAPH BE REVISED BUT THE PM DID NOT SUPPORT HIM ON THIS.

4. IN THE FACE OF THE PM'S AND BOTHA'S CRITICISMS OF THE AIDE MEMOIRE, THEIR EFFORTS TO DRAW US INTO A DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANTIVE POINTS, AND QUESTIONING OF THE MOTIVE IN MAKING A DEMARCHE WITH THE "VEILED THREAT," I MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS AT VARIOUS STAGES IN THE CONVERSATION, SUPPORTED BY MY COLLEAGUES:

A) THE AIDE MEMOIRE REPRESENTS A SINCERE EFFORT TO OPEN A NEW STAGE OF DISCUSSIONS LOOKING TOWARD A SOLUTION CONSISTENT WITH RESOLUTION 385. WITHOUT ENTERING INTO POLEMICS, THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF TURNHALLE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO THE SAG FOR SOME TIME.

B) THE PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE LOOKED AT AS PART OF THE EFFORT TO AVOID CONFRONTATION IN THE UN WITH ADVERSE EFFECTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

C) WE WERE NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS SUBSTANTIVE POINTS IN A POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT, THIS BEING A MATTER BETTER LEFT TO THE PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS.

D) WE COULD NOT TELL HIM HOW THE PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE CONDUCTED, THIS BEING A POINT ON WHICH WE EXPECTED FURTHER GUIDANCE FROM OUR CAPITALS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IN THE MEANTIME, WE HOPED FOR A PROMPT RESPONSE TO THE AIDE MEMOIRE.

E) NO ONE WAS PROPOSING THAT SWA BE TURNED OVER TO SWAPO WHICH MY GOVERNMENT DOES NOT RECOGNIZE AS THE SOLE REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORITY OF NAMIBIA, BUT THAT ALL POLITICAL GROUPS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE PEACEFULLY IN DETERMINING NAMIBIA'S FUTURE, INCLUDING SWAPO.

6. IN THE END THE PM SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO GIVE HIS RESPONSE TO THE AIDE MEMOIRE RIGHT AWAY. HE PUT IT IN THESE TERMS: "WE ARE PREPARED AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED TO HAVE REALISTIC DISCUSSIONS--AS WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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UNSYG AND NATURALLY WITH YOUR GOVERNMENTS--BUT AS FAR AS SWA IS CONCERNED, WE ARE NOT RPT NOT TAKING ANY DECISIONS ON THEIR BEHALF. WE HAVE NOT INTERFERRED WITH THE TURNHALLE CONFERENCE AND CANNOT STOP ITS MOMENTUM. WE CANNOT AND WILL NOT PRESCRIBE FOR THE PEOPLE OF SWA. IT IS THEIR COUNTRY AND THEIR FUTURE. WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK I AM PREPARED TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH WHOEVER WANTS TO DISCUSS SWA IN A CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT. IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO THREATEN US TO COME TO THIS POINT. I SHALL EXPECT TO HEAR FROM YOUR GOVERNMENTS WHERE AND WHEN THE DISCUSSIONS WILL TAKE PLACE."BOWDLER

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